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Other Occasions That Brought THem Together

X The home of John and Sally Moore Smith on Stony Creek was a place where good times could be had, by the young people, as good times were known in pioneer days. At log rollings, wool pickings, flax scutchings aand quiltings the youngsters met, fell in love, and did much of their courting. Sunday would be preaching or all day prayer meetings, when it was not deemed right and proper to think or talk of any thing but Heaven and heavenly things.

The grandest social events would be the weddings. These occurred just as fast as the young folks thought themselves old enough to go to themselves. For a long time after the first settlement of this county the inhabitants, as a rule, married young. There was no distinction of rank and very little of fortune. On these accounts the first impression of love resulted in marriage. A family establishment cost but much labor and nothing else. A glance at a pioneer wedding of the early I800's serves to mark the manners of our forfathers, and shows the grade of civilization which has succeeded their rude social condition.

At that time a wedding created a great sensation and attracted the attention of all the people from I2 to I5 miles around. This is not surprising when it is remembered that this was almost the only gathering, aside from church, which was not attended with the labor of reaping, log-rolling, building a cabin or some other labor.

The people came dressed, to the wedding, in their linsey and coarse linen clothes, all homemade. Because, there were no stores from which to buy tailored things. Most of them came horse-back with only a girth with an attached stirrup for a sadile. Later leather saddles were made.

Shooting matches were also common in the county, especially in the fall months. John Barlow on Buckley mountain was passionately fond of shooting, but the rules of his church,-the Methodist Episcopal, forbade shooting for prizes. A shooting match was arranged for the neighborhood, and he attended as a spectator. The main prize was a quarter of beef. Near the close of the match a neighbor asked Mr. Barlow to shoot as a substitute for him. Mr. Barlow consented, took careful aim, and pierced the center, thus gaining the savory piece of fat beef. A scrupulos fellow member felt honor bound to report him to the Presiding Elder. He was asked to appear before the quarterly conference for trial, but it was proven that he shot only to accommodate a friend and the case was dropped.

Bear hunting, fox chasing, and the hunting of panthers was done partly for pleasure, but partly because of a necessity for the protection of life and property. Bears, foxes, panthers, and wild cats were so plentiful in Pocahontas that it would have been impossiple to raise livestock and poultry if they had not killed these wild animals first.

Basket dinners and outdoor picnicks were also very popular , especially during the latter part of the 1800's and early 1900's. They are still held quite often in many parts of the county.

Training and General Muster days were also great occasions for the men of the county. Refer to manuscript sent in on Dec. 22, 1939

* Apple cuttings came into popularity after orchards began to bear fruit and always took place in the autumn at apple butter making time. All the young people of the community would come and help to pare the apples for the butter to be made the next day. After the apples were all pared, refreshments were served, and if it was not to late, games were played or they had a dance.

Dances as the pioneer knew them, were what we know as the square or barn dance.. They also danced the Virginia reel. In the square dance, figures were called and they danced to the music made by the "fiddle" and the banjo. It usually lasted until morning.

Hay rides were also popular in the late 1800's. When a good deep snow fell, some young man would "hitch up" his fathers team, pile the sled full of hay, heat some rocks to keep the feet warm, and take a sled load of the neighbor boys and girls for a ride. Or if more privacy was desired, each young man took his girl friend in a one horse sleigh.

Spelling bees were very popular, too, during the latter 1800's and early 1900's.

X Huskings-- Usually there was a managing boss and the men were chosen off in teams. Also every red ear was considered good luck and who ever got the most red ears was considered champion. Quiltings usually took place on the same night of the husking. Around eleven o'clock both the husking and the quilting were

suspended. Supper was served, and then came the "hoe down" or square dance. In some communities the man who got the most red ears had the privilege to kiss the prettiest girl at the quilting.

X History of Pocahontas------Price

* From my mother Georgia C. Shinaberry